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SUBJECT: IRAN PRESS: NUCLEAR: FM MOTTAKI ON VIENNA IAEA DEAL

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(SBU) The following contains November 18 nuclear-related public statements by IRIG FM Mottaki, as reported by ISNA:

TITLE: Foreign Minister in Conversation with ISNA: We Will Not Send Out our 3.5 Percent Enriched Fuel; We See

Simultaneous Exchange of Fuel Inside Iran as Worthy of Examination:

SUMMARY: In a November 18 ISNA press article, IRIG FM Manucher Mottaki made the following statements:

- We consider simultaneous fuel exchange within Iran worthy of consideration.

- [Re Tehran Research Reactor - (TRR)]: When our team went to Vienna, we were in a situation where we had announced to the IAEA that we wanted fuel. The IAEA passed this request to Russia and the US. The two countries announced to the IAEA that they were ready to provide this fuel. When they announced this the IAEA said it would be appropriate to have discussions on this matter. We looked into the matter and created a team to discuss this issue. This team travelled to Vienna and there the proposal that was under consideration was presented to the Iranian delegation, not in written form, but the general shape of the proposal was put forward. They announced they were ready to take Iran's 3.5 percent enriched uranium, enrich it to 20 percent and return it. According to this, Iran needed 116 kg of 20 percent enriched fuel in exchange for which it must give 1160 kg, i.e. in increasing the enrichment to 20 percent this amount is reduced to 116 kg. It was said that you need 116 kg of fuel and this 116 kg of fuel is equal to 1200 kg, which is where the 1200 kg number came from.

- The Iranian delegation in Vienna was not authorized to make such a final decision on the spot. Not even the AEOI Head was part of the delegation: his technical expert was there. Therefore it was obvious that the most initial response to such a proposal was that it had to be studied in Tehran and then the answer would be announced. They [the West] announced that we

had until Friday to respond. This proposal was studied in Tehran and we announced our response to the IAEA. The media reports that Iran hadn't given its answer and that they [IAEA, the West?] were waiting for it was the same old psychological warfare - in reality they wanted to say that we should give them the answer that they want.

- Therefore we studied the issue. We had concerns relating to it, the first of which was that we would not limit ourselves to this proposal. Our first option was that we would ourselves produce the needed 20 percent enriched uranium. Our second option is that we buy it. The IAEA proposal was the third option, which we are studying. Because they are pushing on this third option we sought to create an opportunity for them to examine this option. Iran must study this option from various technical and economic dimensions, which is it has done.

- We will definitely not export our 3.5 enriched fuel abroad. This means that we view the simultaneous transfer of fuel on Iranian soil as deserving of consideration. Our technical experts must study the issue of how much fuel should be moved. The opinions they [The West] have given are not acceptable to our experts and our studies continue.

- The propaganda coming from the West bears no relation with reality and our domestic media must be careful. We have announced that the technical committee of the Vienna meeting should meet again so we can put forward our concerns. Such a [follow-on] meeting has not yet been convened.

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- Diplomacy is not "all or nothing", therefore Secretary Clinton saying that Iran must accept this proposal is not diplomatic.
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